some of the bottling plants of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). There was also an interruption in production for about 13 hours at one of the bottling plants of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) at Coimbatore, which is rail fed owing to safety inspection of tracks by the Railway Authorities.

(c) The strike was called by the Transport Associations for modification/ deletion of certain terms and conditions in the tender floated recently by the OMCs. However, after the intervention of the Minister, at which various details were explained to the representatives of the transporters, the strike was called off on the 22nd July 2005.

Separate department for energy

1677. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to create a separate Department for energy within the Ministry;

(b) if so, the reasons for creating a separate Department for energy; and

(c) whether the Public Sector Undertakings are also going to be bifurcated between the Ministry and the proposed new Department?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Jagadishpur-Haldia Pipeline Project

1678. SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether GAIL has any plans to lay gas pipeline from Jagadishpur to Kolkata/Haldia;

(b) if so, the details of the same; and

(c) the project cost, anticipated time for completion and tentative zero-date for commencement of the project?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) GAIL (India) Limited's proposal of laying a gas pipeline between Jagadishpur to Kolkata/Haldia is under active consideration but at a preliminary stage of implementation as the source of gas supply is still to be finalized and downstream consumer tie-ups are being arranged.

Restrictions on import of petroleum products

1679. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme to restrict the import of petroleum products;

(b) whether the import of petroleum products is growing due to the constant increase in the demand of petroleum products against the production of crude oil in the country; and

(c) if so, the necessary steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. Although the country is surplus in most petroleum products, except LPG, imports of non-transportation fuels except kerosene are freely allowed and are made on commercial considerations. Import of transportation fuels is allowed through IOC and by companies who have been granted marketing rights. Kerosene import is allowed through State Trading Enterprises like IOC, HPC and BPC.

(b) and (c) The import of petroleum products has grown marginally from 8 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) in 2003-04 to 8.8 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) in 2004-05 as against growth in exports of petroleum products from 14.6 MMT to 17.5 MMT during the same period. The increased import is on account of the increase in demand and for meeting the demand for EURO III/Bharat Stage II quality fuel laid down by the Auto Fuel policy. During the corresponding period, indigenous crude production has also increased marginally from 33.373 MMT to 33.980 MMT.

In view of India's export earnings of over Rs.28,000 crore from petroleum products in 2004-05, Indian Oil Corporation Limited have been asked to